

77-7344/1

DDA 77-2496

4 MAY 1977

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DDA

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: John F. Blake
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT: Classification

REFERENCE: Memorandum from DCI dated 25 April 1977, same
subject (ER 77-7344)

1. Action Requested: None. This memorandum is submitted in response to your request for comments on the handling of Top Secret material.

2. Background: Agency procedures for handling noncompartmented Top Secret material are consistent with the requirements established by Executive Order 11652 and its implementing National Security Council Directive. It is true that the procedures for handling CODEWORD material, i.e., sensitive compartmented information, are less complex in terms of transmittal and receipting than those for Top Secret documents without compartmented controls.

In CIA the volume of noncompartmented Top Secret material represents a relatively small percentage of the total volume of classified material, therefore, no significant problems exist in adhering to the letter of Executive Order 11652 requirements.

On the other hand, CODEWORD material i.e., sensitive compartmented information, represents a large percentage of the total volume of Agency material and generally requires rapid dissemination to a large audience. Imposition of receipting requirements as strict as those that apply for noncompartmented Top Secret material would seriously inhibit such rapid dissemination.

The Office of Security has no evidence that CODEWORD designations, i.e., compartmented channels, are being used to avoid the stricter dissemination and receipting procedures of the Top Secret control system. Further, it would not appear to be a logical alternative,

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Since fraudulent and unnecessary application of CODEWORD control on a document would limit its dissemination within the Agency, where all staff employees hold Top Secret clearances but not all are approved for compartmented access.

The appropriate regulations governing the handling of both noncompartmented Top Secret material and CODEWORD material, i.e., sensitive compartmented information, are regularly under review. The current requirement that every reader of a Top Secret document acknowledge access by his signature is currently under review by the Agency.

We do not feel that a change in Agency or community compartmentation procedures in this area is necessary or desirable at this time.

/s/ John F. Blake
John F. Blake

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